

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

23rd June 2025

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall on Tuesday, 24th June, 2025 at 5.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. Motions

- (a) National Park City (Pages 1 - 4)
- (b) Nitrates Action Plan (Pages 5 - 8)
- (c) Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks (Pages 9 - 12)
- (d) Supreme Court Ruling - Biological Definition of a Woman or Girl (item withdrawn from agenda)



Subject:	Notice of Motion – National Park City
Date:	24th June, 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes ☐ No ☒								
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted. Insert number 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime									
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Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes ☒ No ☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st July, 2025 in relation to a National Park City.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or falls within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report. At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that a subsequent report will be brought to Committee, if that Committee so agrees, outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications. The Committee is asked to note that this motion will be referred on the first instance to the Climate and City Resilience Committee.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows: (m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i> (n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i> (o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i> (p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i> (q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i>

3.2	(r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i> The following motion has been received: <u>National Park City</u> “This Council recognises the ambition set out in the Belfast Agenda that Belfast will be a “vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable” city by 2035, as well as somewhere “where everyone experiences good health and wellbeing”. The Council celebrate the good work already happening right across the city that will help us achieve this aim; alleyway greening, community growing projects, the Blackstaff greenway, development of a neighbourhood net-zero framework, the One Million Trees project, and many more initiatives working to improve biodiversity, make green spaces more accessible and help make Belfast a greener and cleaner city. The Council believes that a city where people, places and nature are better connected is one that not only helps us to tackle our climate and biodiversity crisis but leads to better health and wellbeing outcomes for everyone in the city. As such, this Council commits to supporting the move to become a National Park City, convening stakeholders from across the city, improving support to empower local communities, bringing together existing projects, and developing a clear roadmap to how we collectively can restore nature for the benefit of people, wildlife and planet.” Proposer: Councillor Áine Groogan Seconder: Councillor Tara Brooks
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to commit to move to become a National Park City - The Climate and City Resilience Committee is responsible for making recommendations on the Council’s approach to addressing the climate crises and the Council’s role and responsibilities at city level, including but not limited to considering public campaigns/public education programmes which the Council may wish to deliver to change behaviour amongst residents and businesses; and to take account of the Council’s statutory responsibilities on sustainable development and the motion will therefore be referred to that Committee.
3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.

3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None.
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Nitrates Action Plan
Date:	24th June, 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

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Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes ☒ No ☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st July, 2025 in relation to a Nitrates Action Plan.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and agree to either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows: (m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i> (n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i> (o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i> (p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i> (q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i> (r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i>
3.2	The following motion has been received: <u>Nitrates Action Plan</u> “Belfast City Council notes the recent launch of a public consultation by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) on a new Nutrients Action Plan.

	The Council expresses deep concern that the consultation has been issued without adequate prior engagement with stakeholders, including local councils, environmental organisations, the farming community, and the public, particularly in light of the significant environmental, economic and social implications of such a plan. The measures currently proposed could devastate agriculture, reduce livestock numbers, and undermine food security. We call on the Minister to immediately withdraw the current public consultation on the Nutrients Action Programme and to bring forward a policy based on genuine partnership rather than punitive policies which risk the viability of our agricultural industry.” Proposer: Councillor Andrew McCormick Seconder: Alderman James Lawlor
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to write to the DAERA Minister and ask to immediately withdraw the current public consultation on the Nutrients Action Programme and to bring forward a policy based on genuine partnership rather than punitive policies which risk the viability of our agricultural industry - the Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None.
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.

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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks
Date:	24th June, 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

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Call-in									
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes ☒ No ☐								

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st July, 2025 in relation to Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or falls within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report. At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that a subsequent report will be brought to Committee, if that Committee so agrees, outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications. The Committee is asked to note that this motion will be referred on the first instance to the People and Communities Committee.
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3.2	The following motion has been received: <u>Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks</u> "Belfast City Council, hereinafter "this Council", expresses its deep concern at the growing number of reports relating to indecent, threatening, and predatory behaviour in Council-owned playparks across Belfast. These spaces, intended for the happiness and well-being of children, are increasingly being compromised by individuals loitering without lawful purpose, in a manner that alarms parents and communities. This Council believes that every child has the right to play safely, and every parent has the right to peace of mind when bringing their children to a local park. Public spaces must reflect public values – including the protection of childhood innocence, the upholding of decency, and the moral duty to safeguard the vulnerable. Accordingly, this Council commits to the creation of a comprehensive Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks Policy – including, but not limited to, the following objectives: 1. To prohibit loitering in and around children's playparks by any adult not accompanying a child, or without a legitimate purpose; 2. To conduct a full public consultation, both online and in person, to hear the views of residents, parents/guardians, and community organisations in directly shaping this policy; 3. To work with statutory bodies – including the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Home Office, and community organisations – to combat predatory sexual crime and anti-social behaviour in our public spaces." Proposer: Alderman Dean A. McCullough Seconder: Councillor Andrew McCormick
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to commit to the creation of a comprehensive Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks Policy - The People and Communities Committee is responsible for the Council's playgrounds and parks and the motion will therefore be referred to that Committee.
3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None.
4.0	Documents Attached

	None.